

BLM Special Recreation Permits Regulations

What is a Special Recreation Permit?

Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) are authorizations which allow for recreational uses of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands and related waters. They are issued as a means to control visitor use, protect recreational and natural resources, provide for the health and safety of visitors. Commercial SRPs are also issued as a mechanism to provide a fair return for the commercial recreational use of public lands.

SRPs are authorizations (43 CFR 2930) which allow specified recreational uses of the public lands and related waters. They are issued as a means to manage visitor use, protect natural and cultural resources, and as a mechanism to authorize the types of recreational uses described below. The types of SRPs issued are briefly described below:

Types of Permits:

1. Commercial Use - Commercial use is defined as recreational use of the public lands and related waters for business or financial gain. When any person, group, or organization makes or attempts to make a profit, receive money, amortize equipment, or obtain goods or services, as compensation from participants in recreational activities occurring on public lands, the use is considered commercial.

Examples: Outfitters and guides, jeep tours, horse- trail and wagon trail rides, and cattle drives.

2. Competitive Use - Competitive use means any organized, sanctioned, or structured use, event, or activity on public land in which two or more contestants compete and either of the following elements applies: (1) participants register, enter, or complete an application for the event; or (2) a predetermined course or area is designated.

Examples: OHV races, horse-endurance rides, mountain bike races, rodeos.

3. Vending - Vendor permits are temporary, short-term, non-exclusive, revocable authorizations to sell goods or services on public lands in conjunction with a recreation activity.

4. Special Area Use - Permits may be required for individual (private, noncommercial) recreation use in Special Areas. Special Areas are areas officially designated by statute or Secretarial order including: components of the National Trails System; the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System; the National Wilderness System; National Conservation Areas, National Monuments, or National Recreation Areas or an area covered by joint agreement between the BLM and a State Government.

Examples: Floating many BLM-managed rivers, backpacking in primitive areas, hiking in wilderness areas in Oregon and Washington

5. Organized Group Activity and Event Use - Organized group/event permits are for group outdoor recreation activities or events which are neither commercial nor competitive. The authorized officer determines when a permit is required based on planning decisions, resource concerns, potential user conflicts, or public health and safety issues. A group is loosely defined as more than one person participating in a recreation activity or event.

Examples: A large scout camp out, a fraternity activity, a large family reunion, or a dual sport activity.

When Permits Are Not Needed

The authorized officer may waive permit requirements when:

The use or event begins and ends on non-public lands or related waters, traverses less than a total of 1 mile of public lands or 1 shoreline mile, and poses no threat of significant damage to public land or water resource values. Example: An outfitter crosses 40 acres of BLM on an existing trail to access his/her hunting camp on State land.

The use is sponsored or co-sponsored by the BLM.

Fees Charged For Permits

Fees for recreation use of public lands and related waters are charged to (1) commercial users, (2) competitive event participants and spectators, (3) vendors, and (4) participants in organized group activities and events which require a permit. Fees can also be charged for individual use of Special Areas, reservation/assignment of sites, and livestock grazing when associated with recreational use.

The minimum annual fee for any commercial SRP is established by the Director (\$80 from 3/2002 till 3/2005) and is updated every 3 years based on the Implicit Price Deflator Index. All commercial permittees will pay at least the amount established as the minimum fee plus any fees due in excess of the minimum fee.

- 1. Commercial Use Fees** – Use fees due in excess of the minimum fee is based on three percent of the adjusted gross revenue derived from use authorized under the SRP.
- 2. Competitive Use Fee** – Use fees are charged on a per user day basis for participants (\$4.00/person/day); as a percentage of gross receipts; or the minimum fee, whichever is greater. When use fee is both commercial and competitive, the higher fee should be charged.
- 3. Vender Use Fee** – Are the same as commercial use fees, including the minimum fee, and are calculated using gross receipts on onsite sales associated with the permitted activity.
- 4. Organized Groups/Events Fees** – User fees are set by the Director in the form of a minimum fee (\$4.00/person/day).
- 5. Other Fees Associated with Permits** – If more than 50 hours of staff time is required for processing a SRP, cost recovery of direct expenses related to the permit will be charged. If the 50-hour cost recovery threshold is anticipated to be exceeded then recovery of costs begins with the first hour.

Insurance and Liability

A property damage, personal injury, and comprehensive public liability insurance policy is required of all commercial and competitive permittees and may be required for vending or organized group activities and events. At a minimum, the permittee shall have in force public liability insurance covering: (1) damage to property in the amount of \$30,000; (2) damage per occurrence (persons, bodily injury, or death) in the amount of (minimum) \$300,000; and (3) a minimum annual aggregate limit of \$600,000.

Bond Requirements

The authorized officer may require the posting of any of the above types of securities for bonds or guarantees in such form and in such amount as the authorized officer determines to be sufficient to defray the costs of restoration,

reclamation, or rehabilitation of the lands affected by the permitted use. Base the amount of the bond on the estimated cost to the United States to perform or have others perform the defaulted obligations of the holder.

Do I Need a Permit?

Pre-applicant Interview Checklist:

- Are you charging a fee
- Do you expect to make money on the event or is the fee to cover expenses?
- Will there be a competition?
- Will you advertise?
- Will you mark a course?
- Will you be expecting vehicles at your event? (How many?)
- Will your event involve public lands?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may need a permit from the BLM. Please review the How to Apply page on the BLM Oregon/Washington State Office website at www.or.blm.gov/SpecialRec/How_to_Apply.htm. or contract Outdoor Recreation Planners Mark Conley, Sandra Miles, or Liz Aleman at the BLM address, phone number, and email address listed below.

Mark Conley
BLM
Eugene District
PO Box 10226
Eugene, OR 97440
mconley@or.blm.gov
(541) 683-6121

Sandra Miles
BLM
Siuslaw RA
PO Box 10226
Eugene, OR 97440
smiles@or.blm.gov
(541) 683-6227

Liz Aleman
BLM
Upper Willamette RA
PO Box 10226
Eugene, OR 97440
laleman@or.blm.gov
(541) 683-7578